The Levite

The Magazine of the JOHN WATSON CLUB

SPECIAL NUMBER

for

THE CLUB'S JUBILEE

1899-1949

THE past is only the present
become invisible and mute;
and because it is invisible
and mute, its memoried
glances and its murmurs are
infinitely precious.
We are to-morrow's past.

MARY WEBB.

The Levite

THE CLUB'S JUBILEE NUMBER

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EDITOR—A. DOUGLAS MURRAY.

THE CLUB'S JUBILEE NUMBER OCTOBER 1949

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EDITORIAL

It is given to few Editors to have the honour of producing a Jubilee issue of their respective productions and in presenting this special number we are humbly conscious of the magnitude of our task of compiling a magazine which will be worthy of the importance of the occasion.

A large part of the contents concern the life story of the Club, and we gratefully acknowledge the assistance which Mr D. M. Thomson has given in its preparation.

Throughout this issue Mr Thomson's name constantly recurs, and the fitting tribute to this "modern Vans Hathorn," which Dr. W. A. Alexander has so ably expressed on our behalf, will echo round the wide John Watson circle.

Many of the foundation members, round whom the Club first developed, have passed on but appropriately we have reached out to some of those who remain, and their contributions show that for them the memories of the past are very much present.

The distant days of the Club's formation were days of tranquility when compared to the uncertain times in which we now live, but no matter what difficulties lie ahead let this year of rejoicing also be a year in which we rededicate ourselves to the service of John Watson's School and its Former Pupils' Club.

THE DEPUTY-KEEPER OF THE SIGNET'S MESSAGE.

I am glad to have been given the opportunity of sending a message to the Club's Jubilee Number of *The Levite*. A strong association of former pupils is a great help to any school, and John Watson's has for a long period been fortunate in the Former Pupils' Club, whose members have shown so much initiative in keeping Levites in touch and promoting developments in the school.

The Governors and Directors welcome the activity of the Club, and hope that it will, for generations to come, help to further the welfare of the school and foster the interests of those who have passed through its classrooms.

E. M. WEDDERBURN, D.K.S.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Dear Fellow Levites,

There are many things in life which you may forget, but John Watson's never! Your memories of the old school have the same stability as the beautiful building itself, and in your own home it is nigh impossible to remain silent about your youthful days there. It speaks volumes that more than one Levite, while on honeymoon, has shown his wife round the school.

Fifty years ago this wealth of affection for John Watson's was happily translated into action for the good of the school. You joined the Club for that purpose, and in your united strength you have written several notable pages of history in the school records. The able pen of our Editor has drawn attention in this Number to the various funds which you have created for the benefit of the school, so I need not enlarge on this point.

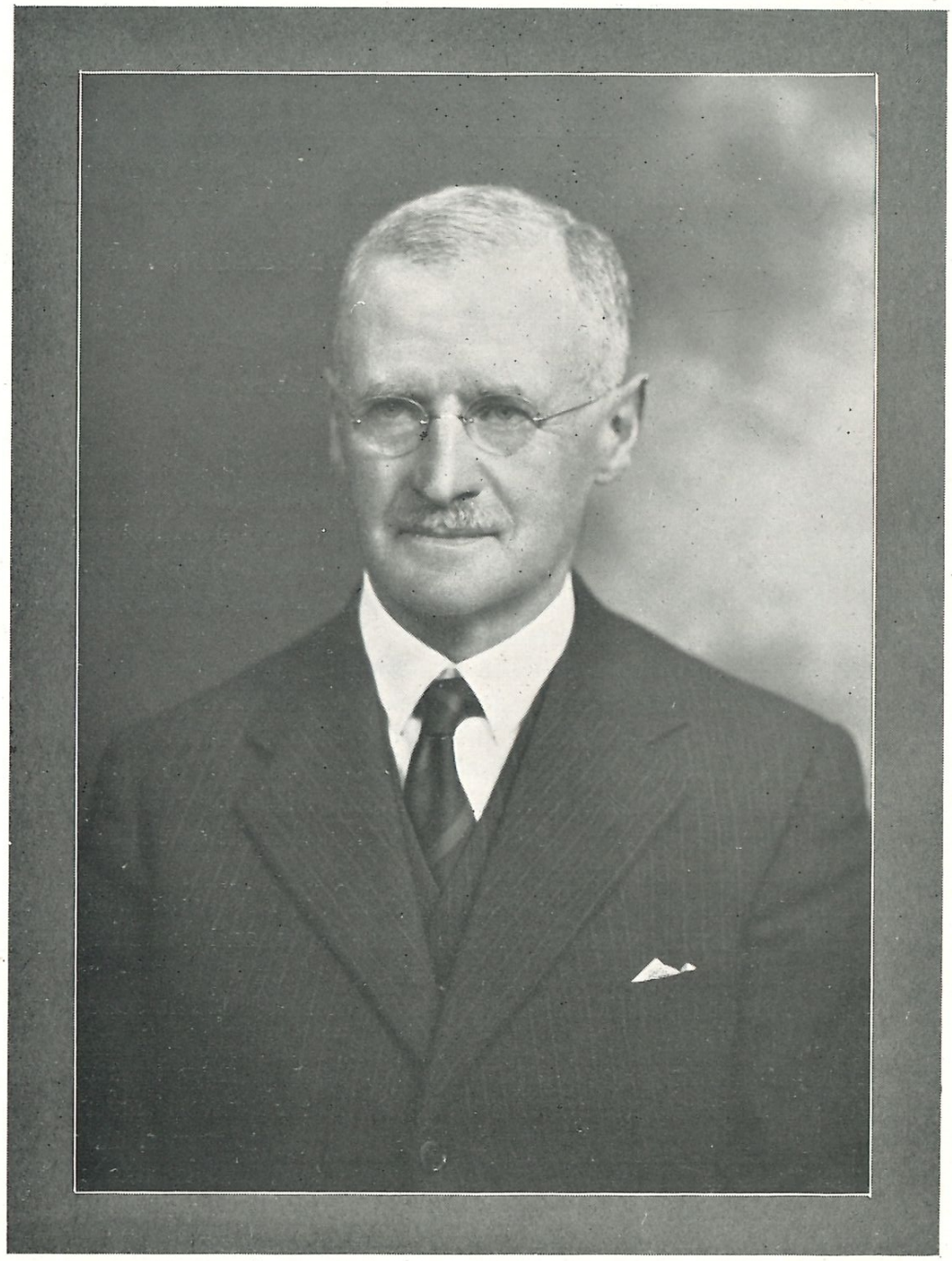
Whatever the days that lie ahead may bring, I feel sure that you can be relied upon, as of old, to rise to the occasion and do all in your power to assist the Governing Body of the school, to whom you owe so much, in their efforts to continue the foundation of the school in its age-long tradition.

In my life-long experience of Club affairs, I have met many kindred spirits ready to sacrifice their time and strength for the school. These generous kindly feelings appear, however, to permeate the whole ranks of the Club members. This was most markedly made known to me at our Jubilee celebrations at the school on 25th June last. There was then one unforgettable moment when you overwhelmed me with a very handsome token of your regard. Your remembrance of my wife on that occasion also touched me greatly. To all subscribers we say, "Thank you."

Long may John Watson's School and our Club flourish!

Yours sincerely,

D. M. THOMSON.



Mr D. M. THOMSON.

D. M. THOMSON.

The strength of a school gains immeasurably from the loyalty and practical interest of its former pupils and it may fairly be claimed that John Watson's is fortunate in this respect. Recognition of the debt which the school owes to David Thomson for this happy state of affairs has been made on previous occasions but the story is worthy of being retold. It is indeed a wonderful and inspiring record.

Fifty years ago when Arch. B. Turner made the first moves for the formation of an F.P. Club by enlisting the interest and enthusiasm of a group of his fellow Levites, one of these was David Thomson. Once it was officially formed he threw himself into the formidable task of building up the Club, of which he was Secretary for thirty years and Treasurer for almost the same period. Recognising that few schools of its size sent a higher proportion of its pupils to the far corners of the earth, he went on to start a magazine as a medium of communication and a bond of interest. That magazine is *The Levite*. He was its Editor for a quarter of a century and, possessed of no mean literary ability and historical insight, he contributed articles to its pages of lasting value, becoming an authority on the history of the school. Most of his spare time was devoted to these ends and he carried on a voluminous correspondence in his own hand, being at the same time the most accessible of men. He initiated and arranged all the annual functions of the Club, the chief of which were the Winter Reunion, which was often preceded by a Dinner, and the Old Boys Cricket Match-cum-strawberry feast. I can testify to the pleasurable anticipation and excitement amongst the scholars to which the latter occasion gave rise in the early years of the century.

Trained in Edinburgh's fine actuarial tradition, he nursed the finances of the Club in admirable fashion, and he was fruitful of ideas not only for strengthening the bonds between former pupils, but for conferring much permanent benefit on the school.

Shortly after the celebration of the Centenary of the school in 1928 he relinquished his offices, but agreed to continue to take an active part in affairs by becoming a Vice-President. In 1937 when the Girls' Association happily amalgamated with the Boys' Club he was invited to become the President of the joint Clubs and he has held office ever since, thus completing fifty years of continuous service in one, or several combined, capacities. It is a record of which he himself, and we, can justly be proud. Such faithfulness is rare and it is well that it should be acclaimed.

There has been another great interest in David Thomson's life, apart from his professional work in the Head Office of the Life Association of Scotland, and that has been the Church of Scotland. To it also, he has given his talents as an active member of the Kirk Session of the Old Parish Church of Corstorphine, one of the most beautiful of the ecclesiastical fabrics of the Lothians. In addition

to a Church Guide he has written its History, both volumes of great merit which called for much research and application.

This short appraisal of his work for the school while it fails to give a complete picture of David Thomson, makes plain his steadfastness of character, His stature has grown with the years and it has been the recognition of his unselfishness of purpose which has been largely responsible for drawing others to the service of John Watson's. He will always hold our affection and esteem, as will Mrs Thomson, who has aided him in his beneficent purposes.

W. ALISTER ALEXANDER (*Former President of the Club*).

". . . . . IN GRATEFUL MEMORY . . . . ."

" In the name of the Former Pupils I declare this library open and I have pleasure in handing it over to the custody of Sir Ernest Wedderburn, Chairman of the Directors."

In these words, spoken quietly as he unlocked the door of the War Memorial Library, Mr D. M. Thomson, our revered President, on Saturday, 19th February, 1949, officially declared open the Library towards which the Club and its members have subscribed more than £350.

The first people to enter the library, even before Mr Thomson had done so himself, were some of the mothers and relatives of the eleven Former Pupils in whose memory the library has been presented. They filed into the sunlit room as from the School Hall came the strains of the 365th Hymn :—

" No longer hosts encountering hosts
Shall crowds of slain deplore :
They hang the trumpet in the hall,
And study war no more."

For a few moments they stood in silence before the little brass plaque above the fireplace on which is inscribed the names of their fallen.

In the Hall were gathered the boys and girls of the school, their mothers or relatives, nearly 100 Former Pupils and several Directors of the school. After singing the Hundredth Psalm and Mr G. W. Rowe, the Headmaster, had read from St. John, chapter xv., verses 1-14, the Rev. D. A. McRury, M.A., H.C.F. (1916) gave this stirring and most moving Memorial Address :—

"A great many war memorials," he said, "have been ' memorials ' in the sense that they look back with sorrow and with pride upon the brave young men and women who gave up their future expectation of life on earth for a great cause.

".....To-day in this place we are dedicating to the Glory of God and in memory of some gallant souls, a library to be used by boys and girls. This is a memorial which looks backwards—and forwards.

It is very appropriate, I think. For those whose names we commemorate and honour to-day were themselves young when they passed out of these walls—none of them was more than fifteen years old—to enter on a new, and for them, sadly brief career in the wider world.

".....I remember the first book I took out of the little school library of my time. It was *Oliver Twist*. That book started one of the greatest happinesses of my life—the enjoyment of good and memorable books. You and those who will come after you in this school will sit in that fine library with its fine tables, chairs and bookcases made of good Scottish oak, and you will read good books there. Often, I am sure, when you are using that library, you will look at the tablet over the fireplace and you will wonder what kind of people these were—the eleven whose names you will read, ten boys and one girl.

".....They would be in the very prime of their physical life. I never saw them in their classrooms but from what I know of this school, I am sure they would be as strong in mind and intelligence as they were strong in health and body.

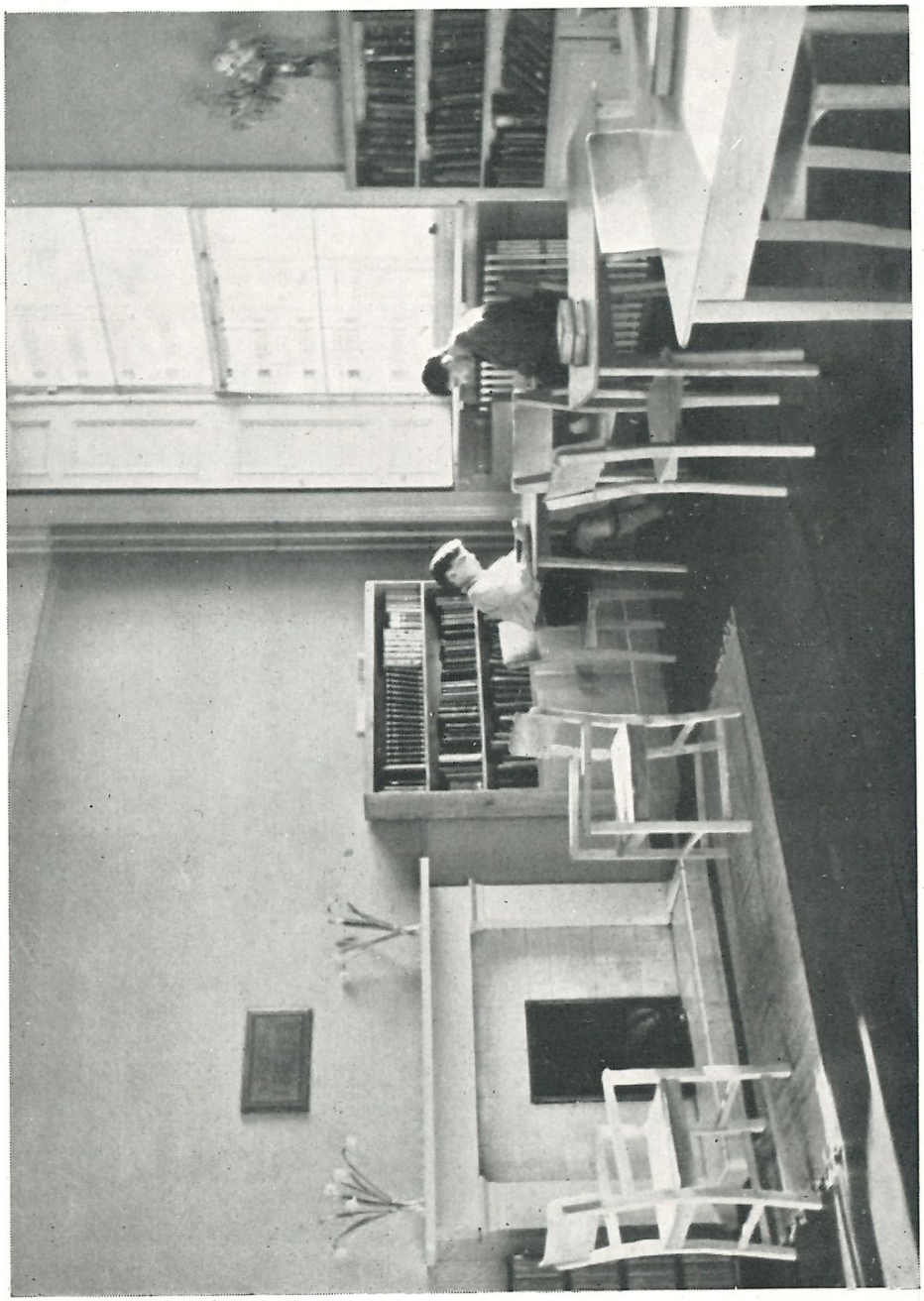
" When I was a boy, that room where your library now is, was called ' The Director's Room,' and, on the last day of the last year in the school, every boy and girl who was leaving after the concert went along there and was given two things—a £5 note and a whole library—a Bible.

".....We hope that your library and all the different kinds of books it contains will be a preparation for good reading for you. But the best of all the reading will be the library you can carry in your pocket —The Book whose leaves, like those of the Tree of Life, ' shall be for the healing of the nations.' We give God thanks for all our books and for His own very great Book."

When the little group, which had accompanied Mr Thomson to the Memorial Library, returned to the Hall, Sir Ernest Wedderburn, Deputy-Keeper of H.M. Signet, told the gathering :—

" I have just accepted on behalf of the school the custody of the Memorial which has been provided to the memory of those Former Pupils who gave up their lives in the World War of 1939-45. I find the occasion a very moving one and I hope you will understand if I speak only a few brief words.

".....I do not need to speak to you of the beauty of the Memorial which has been provided. I would rather think of the use which will be made of it by you and those who come after you. You may think of it just as a room where you may sit in comfort and peace and enjoyment. It will provide all these things. But it will provide far more. It will be a place where you will feel the influence of high effort and ideals, of comradeship and sacrifice, not for your own good but for the sake of others.



THE WAR MEMORIAL LIBRARY.

"……One cannot foresee what the future has in store for any of us. These are difficult and revolutionary times. But I assure you that the Governors of the school in accepting this Memorial will always endeavour to keep green the memory of those sons and daughters who have deserved well of their day and generation."

E. L. MONTFORD.

JUBILEE DAY.

" Royal weather for a royal occasion," and so it was on that memorable day, the 25th of June, 1949—the day on which we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Club's formation. Now that the day is but a memory what do we remember most vividly ?

We remember a brilliant sun shining in a clear sky ; the gentle blowing of a cool breeze ; the gaily-coloured dresses of the ladies and the ever-conventional attire of the gentlemen ; the firm handclasps of old friends ; the visitors and pupils overflowing from the seats on to the trim but browning lawns ; the resounding crack of the willow ; an umpire muffled in a mass of white ; a near six-foot bowler opposed by a diminutive batsman ; the scorers remotely aloof on the far side of the Park ; the young and the not so young eating ice cream with equal relish ; the President surrounded by a bevy of young ladies ; a group of middle-aged Levites deep in conversation ; the far-away look on the face of one more elderly and our wondering what his day-dreams were of ; the upraised finger of the umpire which signified defeat for the pupils with but five minutes left for play—the whole scene framed in by the tall leafy trees of the Park.

And after the whole company had been photographed on the Porch steps we further recollect :—the small groups of Levites wandering round the school ; an oldster's surprise at finding the " plainers " gone and Jenny's Green a fuel store ; the once forbidden Kiddern open to the world ; a peep at the pupils enjoying their tea to the accompaniment of strawberries and cream and their elders doing likewise on the lawns ; the splendid evening concert given by members of the John Watson family—Levites, Staff and Pupils.

There remains another memory but one which cannot be passed over in a few words—the presentation to Mr D. M. Thomson, made by Rev. D. A. McRury, on behalf of his fellow Levites.

In the course of his remarks Mr McRury said :—

" This is the Jubilee of the Club and from the very beginning this Club has really been founded on the enthusiasm of one man. Others were with him when it was founded. Others helped it along. But one man is the foundation stone of the John Watson Club.

" His name is Mr D. M. Thomson, known to decades, generations of Levites as ' D.M.T.'

" Mr Thomson is well up in years but he is young in spirit. I am not going to tell you his age but I can say that he left John Watson's eleven years before I was born.

" I know there are hundreds of boys, and possibly girls too, who like myself have had advice from him personally. He has kept an interest in us when we were at school, after we left, when we were in this country and even when we were far overseas.

" So, on behalf of all those who were boys and girls of John Watson's and who are now men and women with an affection for

John Watson's, I am going to give a small token of our regard to Mr Thomson, with our best wishes and our hopes that he will be with us on many more occasions such as this.

" I also want to say a few words about Mrs Thomson. I know from experience what a wonderful thing it is to have a wife. Mr Thomson has been blessed in his home life with a most gracious and wonderful partner. We thought of presenting her with a bouquet of flowers but the weather has been so warm and flowers do not last so very long, so we decided it would be best for her to choose something for herself."

Along with a remembrance for Mrs Thomson, Mr McRury then handed to Mr Thomson a wallet containing £50, subscribed by the members of the Club.

Mr Thomson, to whom the presentation was a complete surprise, was visibly moved by the warmth of this demonstration of the Club's regard for him. In a few words of thanks he reminded his fellow Levites of what they owed to the school, and urged them to fight and keep on fighting for John Watson's until any difficulties which might lie ahead were overcome.

LOOKING BACK.

I am very sorry that I will not be present at the Jubilee Celebrations. One reason is indicated in the addendum to my signature. Another is that I am just recovering from a somewhat severe illness.

As you say I am one of the original members of the Club. There cannot be many of us left now. I share that distinction with my dear friend, David Thomson, who, I am delighted to learn, is to be specially honoured at the celebrations. Our first President did not hold office for long and then I had the honour of being asked to succeed him. I continued in office for about seventeen years during the tenure of my charge at St. Serf's Church, Trinity, Edinburgh, and it was only in consequence of my departure to Kelso that I felt it my duty to demit.

During those years I was in the closest possible touch with " D.M.T." Many and many a Saturday night he came down to my house in Trinity for consultation, and the consumption of tea and rock cakes was something fabulous. The real work of the Club, in setting it upon its feet and establishing it on a satisfactory basis, was, and for many long years, has been done by him. To do him honour at the celebration is certainly to give him honour where honour is due.

In closing, I send warm greetings to my fellow Club members.

D. G. HAMILTON (Kelso). Levite, 1886.

If there was one emotion or sentiment common to the hearts and minds of the Former Pupils who gathered to celebrate the Jubilee of the Club, it must have been pride—quite justifiable pride that for fifty years the Club has been instrumental not only in fostering and extending the friendships of our school days, but also that it has been privileged to assist in maintaining the tradition of the school.

It was delightful to find how real these friendships were, and to know how much in the minds of those present were the many old boys and girls now scattered all over the world. It is surely fitting that we whose lot in life has fallen in places more or less remote from Edinburgh should gratefully acknowledge how much we owe to our Edinburgh and Glasgow friends for without their hard work and enthusiasm the Club would not have been possible.

I feel however that one name stands out above the rest, one whose vision and courage at the beginning, whose counsel and leadership through all the fifty years have guided the infant of 1899 to its present mature age. Many difficulties and disappointments were encountered on the way, but the proudest of us all on Saturday, 25th June must have been D. M. Thomson. We honoured ourselves when we honoured him.

" All hail," then, " D.M.T."—long may you be spared to enjoy the satisfaction to which you are entitled ! !

GEORGE MACKINTOSH (Inverness). Levite 1897.

The first reunion on a large scale of John Watson Former Pupils took place on the occasion of the George Rowe presentation on 6th January, 1895.

My recollections of this presentation have been printed in *The Levite*, volume II. (August 1909). There I refer to a flashlight photograph taken on the occasion, of which more may still be said. It was not planned as a part of the proceedings and was taken after a large number of those previously present had gone away. Along with nine boys seated on the ground in front (recent Levites), there are 58 other people in the group. Mr and Mrs Rowe and Miss Murray are seated in the centre of the first row and on their right hand Dr. W. Fraser Wright, Mr Henry Robertson and Mr J. Macbeth Forbes are excellently portrayed. These and Gerald Crawford (on the extreme right of the third row) make four of the seven members of the presentation Committee. A. B. Turner and Archibald Wilson were apparently among those who had left before the photograph was taken. I myself was present but was shut out by standing too far on the outskirts of the group. My sister (M. S. Stevenson) is third from the left end of the third row. Next her are some of her contemporaries whom I still recognise (Rebecca Connell, Helen Wright, Helen Riddell, Helen Munro—a remarkable combination of Helens). Two men on Miss Murray's left were probably former Assistant Masters, whose names I do not remember. The photo-

graph is now in the safe keeping of Mr D. M. Thomson, who will show it to those who would like to see their former selves as the flash-light showed them, or to revive their memories of former school-fellows and friends. Some of the portraits are very good, some are poor!

WM. B. STEVENSON. Levite, 1883.

I well remember the early beginnings of the Club and the energy and perseverance which D. M. Thomson put into his task of building it. At that time I was resident in Newcastle-on-Tyne and acting as the Club's local Secretary for that area. I gave him any assistance I could, sometimes by contributing a little money and at other times sending him a short article, notably one about our old Janitor (or Porter) nicknamed by us " The Craw " on account of his huge nose. He was indeed a character.

Two instances will suffice. First, on Vacation Day, as some visitors hesitated at the front door, the Craw impatiently cried out, " If ye're comin' in, come in, but if ye're not comin' in, stay out," and banged the door in their faces. Second, as the old man was warming himself at the playroom fire, the boys used to chaff him and ask him questions which he couldn't possibly answer, whereupon he would say, " Whee' boy!! ye're far too clever for me, Chily's in Indy and Schiehallion's in Skye—away outside "!! I send warm greetings and hearty congratulations to the Club on this great occasion.

JAS. S. WATERSTONE (Brighton). Levite 1880.

At this time when the Club is celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of its formation, it gives me great pleasure to write these few lines, more especially as I was one of its foundation members in 1899. Since I left school in 1878 the grand training which I had received has stood me in good stead throughout my life. First I followed an art career in its various branches until in 1889 I sailed for South Africa to join the rest of my family. I landed in Delagoa Bay at the spot now known as Lourenco Marques and proceeded to the Backerton and Johannesburg areas of which I was one of the early pioneers.

I took part in the building of a section of Kruger's railway from Komati Port to Pretoria in 1891-92, and in the following year issued the first tram and train time-tables in Johannesburg. 1895 saw me importing the first exhibition of paintings ever seen in the Transvaal, but a year later I was more actively engaged in the defence of Johannesburg during the Jameson Raid. Since then I have devoted my time in the main to the publication of directories and my illustrated South African " Who's Who " was the first of its kind in the world. During the early part of this year I was made an honorary member of the Authors' Club in London, of which I have been a member for many years.

I send my best wishes to the Club and its members.

KEN DONALDSON (Johannesburg). Levite 1878.

The Club Jubilee Celebrations bring back to my mind the events of its early days, indeed they take me back further to those days at John Watson's as a schoolboy seventy years ago. I think of "The Craw" who held us all very much under his command, and of his going round the bedrooms in the morning to see that we were all up. How often he would bellow, "Get up, Macgregor," when the thought of the cold bath made me linger in bed. At the cold bath, too, he had a way of dealing with any boy who failed to go over the head. He gave such a one a "hauch" as he called it. That punishment he performed by running his horny fingers from the back of the boy's neck to the crown of his head—it was a lot worse than it may sound. Later, anyone with dirty shoes on got the same dose meted out to him.

Well do I recall the time when nurse was dressing a septic finger and his remark when he saw me squirming—"Do ye call yourself a Macgregor? Och, the Macgregors used to run about the hills wi' their heids off!"

My warmest wishes to the Club—long may it prosper.

ANGUS MACGREGOR (Peebles). Levite, 1881.

I recall with great pleasure the cricket evenings in the Park near the old cherry tree—the sore feeling in one's mouth which followed a session of chewing honey balls on a Saturday afternoon—the jaunts to the Pentlands and a Westerner's surprise at Edinburgh having such beautiful surroundings. I loved the arrival of the sports editions of the evening papers via some local boy returning from leave.

That fondness for sports even now after nearing the seventies is a great asset. I can still tell you through the *Weekly Scotsman* of the doings of the Hibs and Stewartonians and I love to watch the cricket matches here as I look out on the mountains of British Columbia or at the tall ships as they pass by.

ROBERT ARCHIBALD (Vancouver). Levite, 1898.

A Levite of 1895 (H7) sends a message of congratulation both to the John Watson Club and to its Magazine, *The Levite*. The Jubilee of the Club is a great and happy event, and it is good that *The Levite* should devote a special number to it and make a permanent record for the next Jubilee. At the Jubilee Celebrations fitting honour has been paid to David Thomson. He has been the foundation stone and main pillar of the Club for fifty years.

I recall happy and grateful memories of my life and education at John Watson's : even the uniform of long trousers, Balmoral bonnet, red handkerchief and loose overcloak ; the regulated days of classroom discipline, and of furious play indoors and out ; the simple food ; the long hours of comfortable sleep on hard beds and pillows ; the stern awakenings in the morning and the cold bath. Outside,

our life was framed in a scene of nature, in front the Park and behind, the mysterious wood of the Kiddern.

Altogether it was a good training for life, and I put on record my gratitude to John Watson and those who developed his ideals ; with more personal feeling for my teachers, Nurse and the Beak, and to my schoolmates. May the School, the Club and *The Levite*, each conscious of a goodly heritage, go forward and flourish.

CHARLES MCNEIL (Haddington). Levite, 1895.

I am very sorry that I shall not be able to come to Edinburgh for the Celebrations of the Jubilee of the John Watson Club. As you know I was present at the inaugural meeting and am very glad that the Club has survived the first fifty years.

May I express my thanks to D. M. Thomson and all the other enthusiasts who have kept the Club going so long and so successfully, and also to those self-sacrificing members who have filled the Editor's chair, by no means an easy seat I should imagine. Good luck to the Club. May it last for many Jubilees.

DONALD J. BOYD (London). Levite, 1892.

The Editor recalls to me that I was one of that silent band of Levites who was approached by the indefatigable " D.M.T." in 1899 with a view to having a Club Magazine. As one of " D.M.T.'s" contemporaries (he was my Monitor in the High Room) I was one of the obvious people to be asked. And so in due course nearly fifty years ago it happened ! The Club was then in its infancy. We had started by having very respectable dinners " for men only," after which we joined " the ladies " upstairs. In keeping with the spirit of the times our methods have changed.

At a Jubilee the tendency of the older generation is to look back, but it is perhaps better for all to feel young and look forward. What of the next fifty years in John Watson history ? May the Club and *The Levite* go from strength to strength and may they win the support of all John Watson folk. How much all of us owe to these early years of our education in the Old School.

STANLEY NAIRNE. Levite 1896.

A CHRONICLE OF THE JOHN WATSON CLUB.

Old Boys' Club founded, April 1899. Girls' Association, October, 1903.
Reconstituted, 26th June, 1937.

Honorary Presidents.

Sir Charles B. Logan, D.K.S., 1899-1905.
Sir Geo. M. Paul, D.K.S., 1905-1925.
Sir Wm. C. Johnston, D.K.S., 1925-1935.
Sir Ernest M. Wedderburn, D.K.S., 1935-.

Honorary Vice-Presidents.

Major J. O. Naismith, D.S.O., M.A., 1937-1941.
Miss W. L. Gellatly, 1937-1948.

Honorary Members.

Hew H. Crichton, W.S., 1899-1906.
George Rowe, B.A., Headmaster, 1899-1909.
John Langhorne, M.A., Headmaster, 1899-1925.
Hugh Patten, W.S., Treasurer, 1901-1924.
W. C. Dudgeon, W.S., Treasurer, 1924-1935.
Major J. O. Naismith, D.S.O., M.A., Headmaster, 1925-1937.
James F. Fairweather, W.S., 1935-.
C. F. M. Maclachlan, W.S., Treasurer, 1935-.
G. W. Rowe, M.A., Headmaster, 1941-.

Director—F.P. Representative.

Professor W. B. Stevenson, D.Litt., DD., 1937-.

Presidents.

J. Macbeth Forbes, 1901.
Rev. D. G. Hamilton, M.A., 1902-1919.
Wm. Muirhead, S.S.C., 1919-1922.
James Ross, 1922-1926.
Dr. W. A. Alexander, 1926-1930.
Rev. D. A. McRury, M.A., 1930-1932.
Professor W. B. Stevenson, D.Litt., D.D., 1932-1937.
D. M. Thomson, 1937-.

Vice-Presidents.

J. Macbeth Forbes, 1899-1900.
Rev. D. G. Hamilton, M.A., 1901.
Councillor G. W. Crawford, 1902-1905.
Wm. Muirhead, S.S.C., 1901-1919.
Chas. S. Brown, 1904-1906.
James Ross, 1906-1921.
Dr. W. A. Alexander, 1919-1925.
Rev. D. A. McRury, M.A., 1922-1927.
Professor C. McNeil, 1926-1929.
G. W. C. Laidlaw, 1927-1937.
D. M. Thomson, 1929-1937.
James Muirhead, 1936-1942.
Miss Jean D. Bruce, M.B.E., 1937-.
G. D. S. Forsyth, M.A., 1937-.

Secretaries.

A. B. Turner, April-June 1899.
D. M. Thomson, June 1899-1928.
G. R. Clark, 1928-1931.
Dr. A. J. Muirhead, 1931-1937.
F. Rex Dilly, Assistant, 1933-1937.
R. B. Scott, 1937.
A. Douglas Murray, 1938-1946.
A. C. Ogilvie, 1946.
Alex. F. Booth, 1947-.

Treasurers.

A. B. Turner, 1899-1901.
D. M. Thomson, 1901-1929.
G. R. Clark, 1929-1931.
E. Ros Birkett, C.A., 1931-1937.
W. R. Menzies, 1937-1943.
J. D. W. Spence, C.A., 1943-.

Deputy Secretaries and Treasurers.

Mrs Kathleen (Morrison) Brotherston, 1937-1941.
Miss J. T. Rhind, M.A., 1941-.
A. F. Booth, 1947.

Editors of "The Levite."

D. M. Thomson, 1903-1906.
D. M. Thomson, 1908-1929.
Rev. C. G. C. Meister, 1906-1907.
G. D. S. Forsyth, M.A., 1930-1935.
Dr. Gavin R. Millar, 1936-1942.
A. Douglas Murray, 1943-.

Auditors.

H. Robertson, S.S.C., 1899-1908.
Wm. Muirhead, S.S.C., 1909-1929.
J. D. W. Spence, C.A., 1937-1943.
W. R. Menzies, 1943-.

JOHN WATSON'S GIRLS' ASSOCIATION, 1903-1937.

Honorary Presidents.

Lady Logan, 1903-1907.
Lady Paul, 1908-1914.
Mrs Hugh Patten, 1908-1924.
Mrs Mowbray Pearson, 1925-1937.
Lady Campbell Johnston, 1929-1937.

Presidents.

Miss E. Murray, 1903-1917.
Miss W. L. Gellatly, 1917-1937.

Vice-Presidents.

Miss H. Symon, 1903-1912.
Mrs Elliot Roddick, 1912-1916.

Joint Secretaries and Treasurers.

Miss W. L. Gellatly, 1903-1917.
Mrs Elliot Roddick, 1908-1912.
Miss Netta Adam, 1912-1916.
Miss Jean D. Bruce, M.B.E., 1919-1923.
Mrs Mairi (McRury) McLaren, 1924-1928.
Mrs Mary (Paton) Morgan, 1928-1936.
Miss Chrissie Paton, 1928-1936.
Mrs Kathleen (Morrison) Brotherston, 1936-1937.

THE MISS W. L. GELLATLY MEMORIAL CUP.

In 1921 the first School Sports were held on Victoria Day and were so successful that the following year the Old Boys' Club presented a silver cup for annual award to the boy champion.

The girls were not so fortunate—probably because the number of events open to them were few. Now that they take an equal part in the programme, their merit has been recognised by the presentation to the school by the Club of a silver rose bowl, in memory of the late Miss W. L. Gellatly.

It is the outcome of a bequest which Miss Gellatly made to the Club, and from the several suggestions made for the perpetuation of her memory this new award was selected by the Council.

This recognition of the girls' athletic achievements is much overdue for their times for many of the events are excellent and on at least one occasion it is recorded that the time of the winner of a corresponding boys' event was slower.

THE FORMER PUPILS' BADMINTON CLUB.

The F.P. Badminton Club meets for play in the School Gymnasium every Friday evening from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Levites from Edinburgh and its surrounding districts *who are Club members* are invited to join.

Club Tournaments are held on the first Friday of each month, and it is hoped to arrange several matches.

The annual subscription is 5s. for members over 16 years of age, and 3s. for members 16 years of age and under. In addition a small levy for the provision of shuttlecocks, is made for each evening's play.

A business meeting was held on Friday, 7th October, at 7.30 p.m. when the following office-bearers for the current season were appointed :—

Captain—Mr A. F. Booth. *Secretary*—Mr J. M. Reid.
Treasurer—Mr A. Reid.
Members of Committee—Miss M. Petrie and Miss R. Petrie.

Intending members are requested to get in touch with the Secretary, Mr John M. Reid, 5 Transy Place, Dunfermline.

THE JOHN WATSON CLUB THROUGH FIFTY YEARS. 1899-1949.

In this the Jubilee year of the John Watson Club, it is fitting that the story of its beginning and of its progress during the past fifty years should be told.

While the Club, as we know it to-day, had its birth in 1899, the idea of a Former Pupils' Club had been in the minds of Levites before that time. Indeed thirty-six years earlier, in 1863, Mr J. Hunter Macgregor, who left John Watson's in 1858, endeavoured, without success, to revive the custom of holding an Old Boys' Dinner on the Vacation Day. In the late 80's, too, there existed an F.P. Association amongst the girls and "The Club," as it was called, actually boasted a magazine of its own. It was a quarterly production and the topics treated in it even included a page on the latest fashions "with illustrations."

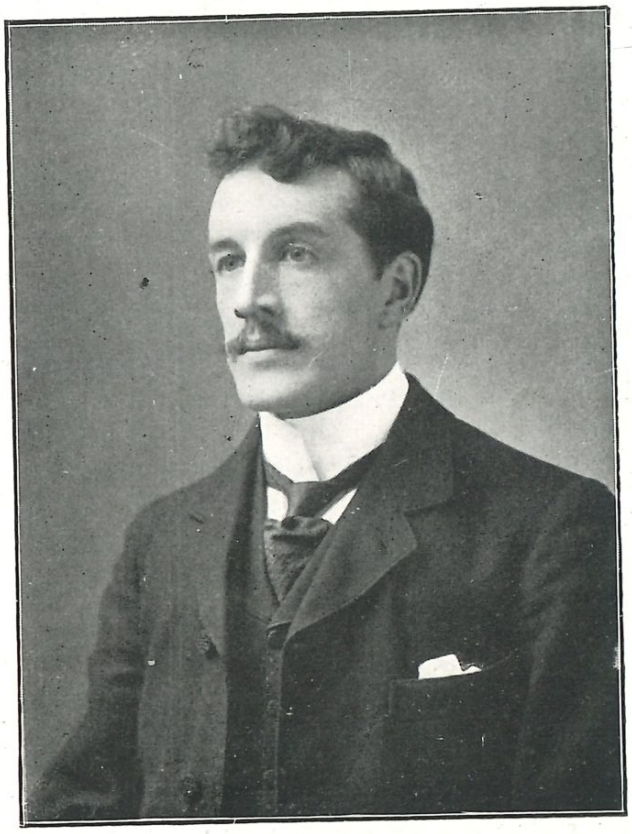
In 1895, after the first organised gathering of the Former Pupils at the school on the occasion of the presentation to Mr George Rowe, to mark the fortieth year of his term as Headmaster, the idea of forming a Club was suggested but not pursued vigourously. Four years later, in 1899, the Club was born. Its birth can be traced back to one day early in that year when Mr A. B. Turner, a Levite of 1881, said to his old friend, Mr William Watson, of 1883, while they were walking down the school avenue, "Let's get up an F.P. Club," and the response was "Why not!" The story behind this episode is this. Mr Watson was home on furlough from Buenos Aires and he called on Mr Turner, for they had been together in the service of the Union Bank of Scotland at its Morningside Branch at one time, and, better still, they were Levites. No one could be long in Mr Turner's company before he would pour forth some story about John Watson's, and with such a congenial companion as Mr Watson he was in his element. Soon he had carried Mr Watson away and they decided that they must pay their old school a visit at once.

Mr Rowe, their old mentor, was no longer Headmaster, he having retired two years previously. In his place sat John Langhorne, a young man of thirty-five who had formerly been under his kinsman, the famous Dr. Almond of Loretto, and who was to rule the destinies of John Watson's for the next twenty-six years.

Mr Turner set to work by getting in touch with Levites whom he thought would be interested, notably J. Macbeth Forbes (1861), H. Robertson, S.S.C. (1877), W. B. Stevenson (1883), The Rev D. G. Hamilton (1886), A. A. Stewart (1890), his brother, J. B. Stewart (1892), D. J. Boyd (1892) and D. M. Thomson (1893). Only seven of these Levites were resident in Edinburgh and these met in Mr Turner's room at 5 Comiston Place, Edinburgh, and the result was the sending out of a circular which stated :—

"At a Meeting in Edinburgh, on 24th April (1899) it was resolved to form a Club of the former pupils of John Watson's Institution for the purpose of bringing them more in touch with one another, also with a view to mutual aid and assistance especially to lend a helping hand to those on the point of leaving school."

When Mr Turner had received sufficient favourable answers he and the other pioneers sat down to draft a Club Constitution. Then a second circular was issued on 23rd June, 1899, to former pupils resident in Great Britain, which stated :—



Mr A. B. Turner.

"At a Meeting held recently in Edinburgh it was decided to form a Club under the above name, namely John Watson's Club, and a Committee was appointed to draft a Constitution for submission to a General Meeting to be held on Friday, 30th inst., at 8 p.m., within the Classrooms of the College of Science, 53 Frederick Street, when the Office-bearers will be elected."

It was at that meeting that the Club came into existence as a constituted body, and the following Office-bearers and Members of Council were appointed :—

Vice-President—James Macbeth Forbes (1861).

Treasurer—Archibald Brownlie Turner (1881).

Secretary—David McLaren Thomson (1893).

Members of Council—Gerald W. Crawford (1883), J. B. Stewart (1892), James Ross (1894) and Charles McNeil (1896).

It will be noticed that no President was elected. The reason was that so great was the esteem in which Mr Forbes—who was the senior Levite present—was held that when he declined that honour the post was left vacant. He however served as President in the year 1901. Chief amongst the rest of these early Office-bearers must be singled out the Secretary—David McLaren Thomson. His work for the Club in these days was immense—as it is even to this day—and the initials "D.M.T." and the "Club" in the course of the years came to be almost synonymous.

It is more than interesting to recall the high ideals which those original members put forward as the objects of the Club. They are so simply expressed in Rule II. of the Constitution which was adopted, that it is worth while reprinting the Rule as it stands :—

"The objects of the Club shall be :—

(1) To provide friendly intercourse amongst and form a bond of union between old boys of the school ;

(2) To be of assistance, generally, in advancing the interests of its members and also of those boys who have just left school ;

(3) To offer such prizes and bursaries as the Funds of the Club may permit."

To this day these "objects" still remain the guiding principles under which the Club carries out the majority of its functions. It is also of interest to note that whereas at first the Club was called "John Watson's Club," when the Constitution was drawn up the apostrophe "s" was dropped and the name prefixed by the definite article "The" so that there would be no confusion with George Watson's.

These preliminaries were only the birth of the Club and the real work of raising it into a strong organisation now began. The initial work of adding members was hampered by the lack of the names and addresses of Levites. A beginning, however, was made on the basis of a list of subscribers to the Rowe presentation of four years earlier and upon this scanty frame was built up a live register. By the snowball method of asking those Levites in Great Britain who subscribed to give the names and addresses of their contemporaries, it was found possible as early as November, 1899, to issue a circular inviting many old boys to become members. Seventy-three were enrolled in the space of a month, and thus encouraged, it was then decided to send a similar invitation to those who were living abroad. The Club by this time had gained official recognition and Sir Charles Logan, D.K.S., gladly consented to become the first Honorary President and the first Honorary Members were :—Mr Hew Hamilton Crichton, W.S., Mr Hugh Patten, W.S., the School Treasurer, Mr George Rowe and Mr John Langhorne.

The first Annual Meeting and Reunion was held at the School on Saturday, 23rd December, 1899, when twenty-nine Levites sat down to dinner in the Boys' Dining Room, under the Chairmanship of Mr

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Macbeth Forbes. One notable absentee was Mr Wm. Watson who had returned to the Argentine and was acting as the Club's Local Secretary for the South American Continent!

At that first Dinner there was present a Levite of 1886 who was to become the second President of the Club. He was the Rev. David G. Hamilton, now of Kelso. Although an extremely busy pastor, he showed a keen practical interest in all that concerned the school, and the Club owes much to his wise leadership over the long period of seventeen years.

In February, 1903, the Club started a new venture—one which at first was only on a year's probation but which was to become one of the very corner-stones of the Club—the publication of a Magazine. The origin of this venture can actually be traced back to a much earlier date.

Shortly after the enrolment of the first members began the Club Secretary, Mr Thomson, whose mind was no doubt seething with new ideas, in writing to a new member said, "What do you think of a handwritten manuscript magazine being started in connection with the Club? Would you give it your support in the way of contributions?" The reason why a handwritten magazine was suggested was a matter of funds or rather the lack of them—not surprising when it is added that the Club was then only twelve days old.

The enrolling of new members caused the pursuit of this scheme to be side-tracked for a while but soon it was realised that with such a scattered membership—one-third resident abroad and only one-fifth near enough to attend Club functions—something required to be done to keep the interest of these members stimulated. What the Secretary did was to periodically issue a typewritten account of the Club meetings to these members and to introduce into the Council's Annual Report a sort of glorified "Club Talk."

These were the fore-runners of this new magazine.

The aim of the first Editor was "To recall past events at school and to contribute our quota towards making the Club a living thing by recording current topics of the Club, the accomplishments of the old boys and passing events at the Institution."

The best name for any new magazine normally raises a good deal of discussion but in this case there were few suggestions—one was "Leftite"—and above these, one alone stood out—*The Levite*. Here was a name which could not even be said to be original but it had an immediate appeal, "The Levite"—Yes, that was a good name! But where did the name originally come from and who introduced it? Many Levites will probably not know the exact source and one cannot but excuse either the printer of a much later date who speculatively eyed the facial features of the then reigning Editor and remarked—"You know Mr ——, you don't look like a Jew," or the second-hand bookseller who apparently judged its classification from its title only and placed it under the section headed "Religious Literature."

The name was introduced to the school by the late Mr George Rowe, Headmaster from 1859 to 1897, and these words of his give the full explanation.

" Fifty years ago (*circa* 1853) I was one of the assistant masters in a school in the South of England. Two names were then in common use in the school, ' Levites ' and ' Manassites.' The former applied to the boys who were leaving at the close of the current term and the latter to the younger boys. The Levites as being the oldest . . . . boys were regarded as a very superior body, but still it was thought proper that there should be a distinctive name for the rest of the school, also of a similar origin and at the same time indicating the use for which it was intended. The word fixed on was ' Manassites '—derived from the same source and its first syllable ' Man ' (the same as the first syllable of the Latin verb *manere*—to remain)—suggesting that it belonged to those boys who still remained at school. The name Levite was unknown in the Institution before the year 1858 . . . The other name seems to have found no favour with the boys and they have been content to wait patiently till the time should come for them to bear the honoured name of Levite."

The choice of Editor was just as important as that of the name, and the post was first filled by the originator of the venture, Mr D. M. Thomson, who also held the posts of Secretary and Treasurer.

Successful as this literary effort was to prove—its first number ran to two editions—it was quite a bold step for a Club which was as yet only a youngster—if a thriving one—with an annual subscription of only 2s. 6d. and a balance of a mere £10. Money fortunately went further in these days for it is recorded that the cost of printing the first *Levite* was only £3 14s. 6d. (about a tenth part of its present cost) and a further interesting example is the fact that when the Club presented to each of the some hundred pupils " a cabinet-sized photograph of the school mounted on an artistic frame " as a memento of the Coronation of King Edward VII., the cost barely exceeded £4.

After the Annual General Meeting of the Club early in 1903 a new name appeared among the members of the Council, that of John O. Naismith. Intimate as the relations of the former pupils were with the school, no one was to foresee how close his connection was to become, as will later be seen.

The year 1903 also witnessed a further development in the activities of the former pupils, namely, the formation of the Girls' Association. Hitherto the old girl pupils had, along with the old boys, been the guests of the school at an At Home, held annually after the Club Dinner. But the appearance of *The Levite* in 1903 heralded a change, for in its pages an invitation appeared from Miss Emma Murray, an old girl herself, asking " her girls " to become an organised body The response was immediate and the Girls' Association was formed in October, 1903, with Miss Murray as its first President. No happier choice could have been made for, apart

from being a former pupil, she had been on the school staff for nearly thirty-five years, first as Assistant Matron and from 1875 as Matron. With such a personality at the helm it is not surprising that the Association flourished and within a few months its membership was approaching the hundred mark. Its first Secretary was Miss W. L. Gellatly.

A third new development in 1903 was "The Kirking of the Levites." This tradition was upheld for nearly forty years until disturbed by the advent of the second world war. It started in this way. It so happened that on the Sunday following the Reunion a new pipe organ, presented to the Dean Parish Church, was to be dedicated. The idea came to Miss Murray and Mr Dickson (a former teacher) that some of those present might wish to take their places once again in the School Gallery of the Church. More than forty Levites responded and derived so much enjoyment from the Service that the Kirking of the Levites was later adopted as a regular event on the first Sunday after the Reunion. In later years Levites on several occasions have preached the sermon or read the lesson at this Service. The appropriateness of this continued link with the Dean Parish Church is strengthened when one remembers that the school has been its principal supporter since 1833 and has a permanent right to the south gallery of the Church. Further, John Watson's can claim to be the only school in Scotland to have endowed, with the Baird Trust as equal givers, a Parish Church, as it did the Dean Church.

By the end of 1904 the Club's combined membership was well over 200 and their bond of fellowship further strengthened by the contributions to the pages of *The Levite* by the "ladies." *The Levite*, after two numbers, was considered by the Council to have earned its spurs and approved as a permanent part of the Club. It is believed to be older than any other school magazine in Scotland and the only one run by former pupils.

During all these personal Club activities the members did not forget the school and showed their interest by awarding medals and prizes annually.

In 1904 another item was added to the Club's Calendar—The Levites' "Jaunt." This was the continuation of the school age-long picnic to Habbie's Howe in the Pentland Hills, with the customary hill climbing race up Carnethy by the boys. They were conveyed in charabancs, which had superseded the carts of older days.

The year 1906 saw the Boys' Club suffer a severe loss by the death of Mr Turner, its principal founder. Much of its early success was due to his efforts and it was the privilege of the members to share in the erection of a memorial stone at Aviemore where he died on the 6th of April.

The same year also saw a change in the editorship of *The Levite* when Mr C. G. C. Meister stepped into the breach when Mr Thom-

son resigned on account of the heavy duties involved by his being also Secretary and Treasurer. His period of relief was brief however, for, when Mr Meister resigned in October, 1907, he agreed to take over the post again—this time he was to hold it for the next twenty-three years.

During the life of the Club a pleasing feature has been the spirit of friendliness which exists with the school staff and the tenth anniversary of the Boys' Club's formation, in 1909, renewed in the minds of the Levites their regard for their old mentors, Miss Murray and Mr Rowe. Miss Murray had completed forty years in the service of John Watson's and her guidance of the Girls' Club since its inception had been invaluable. Her former charges and fellow Levites of both sexes looked upon this record as a splendid opportunity to show their affection for her. In this way the 1909 Reunion had a special importance for a presentation was then made by the youngest old girl on behalf of the Clubs. It took the form of a gold filigree bracelet, with amethysts inlaid, and a purse of sovereigns.

Ten months later the happy memories of this occasion, at which Mr Rowe had been present, were dimmed by the news of his death in his eighty-first year. The Clubs, in their desire to keep his memory green, presented annually to the school a bronze medal for religious knowledge in his name. They further sponsored the raising of funds for the purpose of erecting a memorial and they consulted a Levite of 1873, Mr Weir Schultz, who was an eminent architect, on the subject. On the 30th June, 1911, in the Entrance Hall of the school, a medallion portrait in bronze, executed by Mr Percy Portsmouth, A.R.S.A., head of the sculpture section of the Edinburgh College of Art, was unveiled by the Club President—Rev. D. G. Hamilton. When one realises that the sculptor had never seen Mr Rowe and had worked entirely from a single photograph it is understandable why older Levites consider the likeness remarkable.

As with King Edward VII.'s Coronation, the Clubs did not let the Coronation of King George V. pass unmarked at the school. They presented the pictures which for many years adorned the walls of the Boys' and Girls' Dining Rooms. Probably the most famous—and to the boys at least, the most well-known—was that entitled, "The Boyhood of Raleigh," by Millais.

The outbreak of the first world war in 1914 found the members enlisting in such numbers that the Clubs' activities were limited to the awarding of prizes and even *The Levite* was not published for three years. Nearly all the office-bearers were on service, and prominent among those who were overseas were several who had taken part in the Jameson Raid and had fought in the Boer War of 1899-1902. By the end of the war three out of every four members of the Boys' Club and several girls had answered the call, with the inevitable thinning of their ranks. Altogether twenty-one Levites died on service, and a further thirteen were wounded. A happier

memory is that twenty-nine Levites were decorated or mentioned in despatches.

In March, 1919, Mr Thomson issued a circular whose opening sentences ran as follows :—

" Now that the old boys are returning from overseas and that scarcely a day passes without an old boy paying me a welcome visit, this seems to be an opportune moment to restart the Club. I am taking it solely upon myself (relying upon your goodwill to me in the past) to issue this circular and I now ask you to ' join up ' again."

The Club came to life again at once. Amongst the first things done was the erection in the School Hall of a memorial tablet to the fallen and their memory was further perpetuated by the Boys' Club instituting an Annual War Memorial Bursary. The memorial tablet was unveiled on 13th February, 1920, by the Rev. D. G. Hamilton, the Boys' Club President.

The Girls' Association, while not losing any members through the war, missed its well-loved first President, Miss Murray, who died on the 5th of April, 1917. She had spent fifty-seven years within the walls of the school and her memory is upheld to this day by the annual award to a girl member of the " Miss Murray Memorial Bursary." It was fitting that her successor should be Miss W. L. Gellatly, for she, too, after several years sojourn in the greater world, had come back as Assistant Matron and now succeeded Miss Murray as Matron.

The Clubs' activities in the period immediately after the war were directed mainly towards the building up of their strength. The enthusiasm of the Levites had in no way diminished and their thoughts were constantly turning towards the scholars and younger Levites. Two such examples—there were many others—can be instanced.

First, the presentation of a silver cup for the sports champion, at the second Annual School Games in 1922, and second, the provision made by Mr Wm. Fyfe Weir (1862) in his Will for a legacy of £1000 to the school " to establish a fund for the benefit of children of merit at the Institution." The Weir Bursary of £40 a year has helped many an old pupil on the road to distinction.

As time went on new ideas for expanding the social side of the Club were tried. Chief among these were proposals for the formation of F.P. Tennis, Rugby and Badminton Clubs. The main obstacle was the fact that most Levites already belonged to the Clubs connected with the schools at which they had continued their education after leaving John Watson's, or to Clubs near their residence. The difficulties were found to be too great to overcome in the case of a Tennis Club but an F.P. Rugby Club was successfully formed and won its first match on 1st January, 1924, against Kenard Rugby Club. The tradition of playing on New Year's Day was kept up for many years.

The Badminton Club, formed in 1924, proved a great acquisition to the Club life in the winter, and play was held in the School Gymnasium until 1939. With the court available again after the war play again resumed in 1947.

The year 1925 saw the dawning of a new era at the school. John Langhorne had passed on and in his place was appointed a Levite of 1898, Major John Oliver Naismith, D.S.O., M.A.—the same Levite who served on the Club Council in 1903 and for the following few years. The Former Pupils could not but be delighted at this further cementing of the ties binding them to their old school, but their delight was not allowed to override the memory of Mr Langhorne, an outstanding Headmaster, and on the 6th of November, 1926, the bronze tablet which stands in the School Entrance Hall was unveiled by Dr. W. A. Alexander, the Boys' Club President.

Major Naismith, who had been a pupil under both Mr Rowe and Mr Langhorne came to his post with an immediate advantage over his predecessors—a personal knowledge of the ways in which the scholars' lives could be improved—and his advent was to see many changes made which were even more revolutionary in their concept than had been those of Mr Langhorne when he became Headmaster in 1897. But if his coming was to see much that was old swept away, he was, as a Levite, deeply conscious of tradition and its place in the minds of the former pupils.

The Clubs, on the other hand, did not rest their thoughts only on the past but already had their minds alive to an important event in the school life—the centenary of its opening in 1828 and the best way of celebrating the occasion. For the answer, these sentences, quoted from the circular issued at the time, will suffice.

"As the Centenary of the School draws near, it is therefore natural that the pupils, past and present, should wish to do honour to the best school of all. The Old Pupils' Clubs have joined forces for the purpose . . . . and they are unanimous in their desire to commemorate 12th August, 1928, by founding a Recreation Fund whereby some of the boarding-school features indoors and out of doors, at John Watson's, may be modernised."

The ambitious target of raising £500 was set.

During the next few years the former pupils, while continuing their normal annual functions, continued to build up the proposed Fund. But that their thoughts for the immediate welfare of the pupils were not subordinated to their future aims was instanced by the action of a former girl pupil, Miss Helen Munro. She had for many years longed to assist in some way. "Constant leadership of the young," she wrote, "must be most exacting and if any help can be given to those who have this responsibility surely it should be forthcoming. It is an honour to be allowed to 'take a hand in the game' however indirectly."

These words are just as applicable to-day and it was a tribute to her confidence in the work of the Matron and fellow Levite, Miss

Gellatly, that, in making a gift of £250, she gave her full rein to work out her own ideas. Miss Gellatly showed her appreciation of this trust in many practical ways, all designed to make the atmosphere, especially on the girls' side, more modern and comfortable.

In so digressing from the events leading up to the Centenary Celebrations is seen but one example of the love and gratitude to the old school which rests in the hearts of all of us and it was these self-same qualities which assured the success of the Recreation Fund.

When the morning of the great day arrived—the day finally chosen was the 19th of July, 1928—the memory of the Founder of the school was fittingly recognised. Several Levites visited the grave of John Watson, which lies less than thirty yards distant from the Covenanter's Monument in Greyfriar's Churchyard, and laid a wreath of flowers in the school colours on the grave, along with one on behalf of the D.K.S., and the Commissioners of the Signet. At the official ceremony in the School Hall it was the honour of Dr. W. A. Alexander, the Boys' Club President, to represent the former pupils and this privilege entailed no light responsibility for hitherto no such opportunity had presented itself for those who had enjoyed the benefits of the school to give public expression to their feelings of indebtedness. Later Dr. Alexander came to the crux of his part in the day's proceedings—the presentation of a cheque for £600 to the D.K.S., Sir Wm. C. Johnston—" to be constituted a Centenary Recreation Fund of which the annual income shall be devoted to providing facilities for indoor and outdoor recreation for the present pupils." For the overall success of the scheme and the passing of the target by more than £100, two main factors were responsible and here tribute must be paid to both. The first factor was the excellent team work between the old boys and girls. Each side was indispensible to the other, and in their work together were sown the seeds of the ultimate union of their two Clubs. The other was the amazing amount of work put in by Mr Thomson, the Boys' Club's Secretary, Treasurer, and Editor.

When Mr Thomson retired from the position of Editor in the following year, the members were conscious of their loss, which was magnified in 1930 when he felt it necessary to give up his other offices on account of continued pressure of business. He had devoted the best part of his life to the interests of the Club, and by his efforts over more than thirty years had placed it in a flourishing condition. The members however were loath to lose his guidance entirely and he was accordingly elected Vice-President. In due course the members also marked the event by their presentation to him of a tangible token of their regard.

During the long years of his Secretarial work, Mr Thomson had been in touch with a Levite of 1879 named Claude H. M. Balfour (a cousin of R. L. Stevenson), who was a Bank Manager in Foochow, China. The birth of his two daughters in 1905 and 1908 were duly recorded in *The Levite* and the value of the Magazine as a link with

the school was greatly enhanced when news came after his death in 1931 that Mr Balfour had left the residue of his estate, amounting to £24,000, to the school, subject to certain life rents.

In 1931 the proposals of the Educational Endowments (Scottish) Commission regarding the future of the school were causing anxiety in the minds of the Former Pupils. The Commission's first proposal that the pupils should receive their education at other schools and merely reside in the school brought strong opposition from Directors and Former Pupils alike. It seemed certain that the school, as it existed, could only be saved if the teaching staff was brought into a superannuation scheme, and once again the call to support the finest traditions of John Watson's went out to the members all over the world. A committee of five Former Pupils worked in close collaboration with the Directors in resisting later amended proposals to limit education at the school to the Primary stage, and it was not until 1934 that these efforts were crowned with success and John Watson's was saved.

The declared readiness of the Directors and Former Pupils—the latter raised £600 through a "Guarantee Fund"—to strengthen its finances was undoubtedly a decisive influence in the final decision, and there is also no doubt that the strongly-expressed convictions of the Former Pupils' representatives, that no essential change in the character of the school should be made, greatly impressed the members of the Commission and the Scottish Education Department. Further evidence of that good impression was shown by the fact that the latter, in amending the composition of the School's Directorate, stipulated that one member should be a Former Pupil. In due course Professor W. B. Stevenson was nominated as the Club's accredited representative on the directorate. His labours during the anxious months had been tremendous and his wisdom a constant source of help to the members.

Here must be singled out one complete break with tradition, which the Commission brought about—the introduction of fee-paying pupils. The question was naturally asked, "Will their loyalty to their school be as strong as that of the foundationers?

The answer has given a great deal of satisfaction to the Club Council, for the majority of these fee-paying pupils, when they have become Levites, have joined the Club and have worked hand-in-hand with the Foundationers for its good and the welfare of the school.

While the school continued its functions much as before, the officials of both Clubs were nevertheless aware that no great reserve was available for the renovations and alterations which the new conditions would entail. Further, it was the Directors' desire to re-equip the school in many ways and make it second to none in the country. All this could not be done without money, so, in order to assist, the Clubs organised a Garden Fete in 1935. Their close collaboration again triumphed and no less a sum than £695 was

raised. The money so gained was put to good use, and when the Directors in the following year carried out further structural alterations on a large scale, the new John Watson's was complete.

The pooling of the joint resources of the Boys' Club and the Girls' Association on these two occasions again brought to the fore the idea—now almost a necessity—of being a single unit. A further reason for such action had arisen when the Former Pupils gained the right to be represented on the Directorate.

The Endowments Commission, in hearing the evidence of the Clubs' representatives, had apparently not realised that there were two bodies and when this right was granted it was given to " The John Watson Club "—the Old Boys' Club. A manifestly unfair situation therefore prevailed and in fairness to the Girls' Association it had to be rectified.

It was appropriate that on Founder's Day, 26th of June, 1937—inaugurated only the previous year—they did come together under a new constitution.

The motion for the Act of Union, " that the John Watson Club be reconstituted with the admission of the members of the Girls' Association," was proposed by Mr D. M. Thomson and seconded by Miss W. L. Gellatly, on behalf of the Girls' Association.

As its first President the members selected Mr Thomson—a fitting choice with which to commence a new era.

The same year the Levites in Glasgow joined forces and met as one Club. They had both had separate social Clubs earlier—the girls as far back as 1929—and now they followed the example of the mother Club and united. *The Levite* had for so long been the only means of maintaining the interest of the members resident outwith Edinburgh that this step of putting these local Clubs on a proper basis was an important development. Its success was immediate and filled a long-felt want but it was unfortunate that very soon the second world war was to break out and cause its activities to be discontinued.

Prior to the Union of the present Clubs, the idea was mooted that the Club should attempt to strengthen the old endowment capital of the school. This met with widespread approval and it was one of the new Club's first duties to set the wheels of such a project in motion.

The aim was to gather £4000—the amount of the Founder's own legacy in the year 1762—and the governing thought was to establish the " Development Fund," as it was named, to help in meeting the cost of any further development connected with the Watson circle generally. It received a splendid send off by the transference of the unused balance of the F.P. Guarantee Fund and further donations increased its total to £773 by November, 1937. This Development Fund has proved its usefulness again and again, for grants from it have met emergencies and assisted new schemes.

For example, a grant of £100 from that Fund started one of the most ambitious schemes ever embarked on by the Former Pupils. This is the F.P. Foundationers' Trust, which will be always honourably associated with the name of Colonel James Donaldson (1877), of Johannesburg. In his keen desire to extend the benefits of the school, such as by adding to the number of foundationers, he handed over an investment worth £500. A Trust Deed, having this object in view, was signed by the Deputy Keeper of the Signet, the Headmaster and the Club President. The Colonel's inspiring lead was however hindered temporarily on account of an emergency which might have destroyed an old tradition.

Traditions have always loomed large in the minds of the Former Pupils, which makes it easy to understand one of the most dramatic episodes in the school's history. It came about in this way. In the early spring of 1939, the Directors, faced with ever-rising costs, were about to admit financial defeat in their efforts to continue freely all the benefits which the school had maintained for over one hundred years. Their proposal to discontinue the free supply of clothing to the pupils had an immediate reaction on the Club's representative. He requested and was granted a short delay before they carried out their proposal. His idea was to ask the former pupils to share part of the burden and not the children's parent or guardian. Since time was short, in collaboration with the Club President, a number of the elder members were approached and these quickly promised donations amounting to £115 a year for each of the next few years, when the position would be re-examined. The Club Council gave further aid through the Development Fund. When the Directors next met, they were offered the sum of £200 for the next three years—on condition that no levy for clothing was charged during that period. with this backing the Directors were able to discard their proposals and the situation was saved. All this was accomplished in *seventeen* days, and is a perfect example of the collaboration which was made possible through the Club having a share in the management of the school.

When the war broke out later in the year, Levites throughout the world were ready for the call and the Club, for the second time in its life, was faced with a serious situation.

A great part of the success of any Club function has always been the magnetic influence of the " old building." A chance to revisit their childhood home has always drawn Levites from many parts of the country. But how was the Club going to fare when the pupils were evacuated to Marchmont House, Berwickshire, and the school occupied by the Military Authorities ? It was a situation which had not had to be faced during the 1914-1918 war, and even then, the Club had practically been forced to close its activities.

Much more was at stake this time for it was imperative that the several schemes which the Club had in hand, had, for the sake of the school, to be carried out. One thing however was in its favour ; the

Club was now much stronger in every way. The membership roll, for instance, was much greater—it stood at 336—and further its feet were financially securely planted. The Council, therefore, were determined that even if its social activities had to be entirely suspended, it would continue to press on with its other undertakings. This it did, indeed in one particular instance—the F.P. Foundationers' Trust—it vastly expanded the scheme.

In 1943 the total funds of this Trust amounted to nearly £750 but several times that amount was required to endow even one Foundationer.

Colonel Donaldson was not slow to realise that if the child of his brain were to succeed, even in the distant future, a fresh call to the members was necessary. He also recognised that the disturbed conditions then prevailing were not propitious for taking up the interrupted task of collecting a large sum. To counterbalance this he made a generous offer—a promise to double any sum, up to a total of £5000, contributed to the Fund, either in cash, or by bequest in a Will, provided intimation of such was made before 31st December 1944. That was his challenge to the Levites and this was their answer.

Every pound was met with a pound and even more, for, when the time limit expired the total donations and promises stood at £5746 and at the present time the total assets collected or promised are nearly £12,000.

Amongst the legacies promised to the fund was that of the late Percy S. Macdonald, C.I.E., a Levite of 1904. He had a warm regard for the school and shortly before his death on 1st January, 1945, he intimated to the President that he intended to leave £7000 to the Club to be apportioned between the various funds. The Club counts itself rich in its friends ; surely no other Club has received so many legacies from its members, all for the good of the school.

When the war dragged on to its close in 1945 there were grievous casualties amongst the members, but one thing survived—The Club. The Council's endeavours had been successful and thanks to the kindness of the Club's senior Vice-President, Miss Jean D. Bruce, M.B.E., it had managed to hold Reunions in a homely atmosphere which in some magical way seemed to have a breath of John Watson's about it.

What of the fallen ? Nearly one third of the total membership of the Club had been on service, and regretfully eleven Levites—ten Old Boys and one Old Girl had made the supreme sacrifice, and in addition several were wounded in action.

On the honours side can be recorded eight decorations for gallantry and three Levites were mentioned in despatches.

As after the earlier war, the Club perpetuated the memory of its fallen but on this occasion the means took a more practical form. The room at the school, for so long known as the Directors' Room, was completely fitted out as a War Memorial Library, and during an

impressive Dedication Service on the 19th February, 1949, conducted by the Rev. D. A. McRury (1916), it was formally handed over to the Directors, for the use of the present pupils, by the Club President, Mr D. M. Thomson, who was the originator of the scheme.

Two years passed after the end of hostilities before the pupils returned from Berwickshire and it was not until 1948 that the Club was able once again to hold some of its activities within the school and its grounds.

But the Club, if it suffered severe losses in the war, was also badly hit by the effects of the war. The denial of access to its *Alma Mater* for nine long years undoubtedly left its mark for a time.

Another contributing reason was that to many younger Levites the real John Watson's was up till recently merely a name. In one case a girl member spent her full term at John Watson's, yet her stay within the school walls was confined to a single night.

There is every confidence, however, that these younger Levites too, will fall under the spell which the Old School casts on everyone who passes within its portals. They will find that the kindly eye of Vans Hathorn—the real creator of the school—will look down on them in the School Hall from day to day ere they depart, and they will join with all the other Levites in acclaiming—" Long Live John Watson's—Long Live The John Watson Club " ! !

That is the story of the John Watson Club—its birth and its growth until the celebration of its fiftieth anniversary. It is hoped that these lines will recall many delightful and thrilling memories to the older members of the Club and that the interest of the younger Levites will be so aroused that they will determine to continually shoulder the responsibilities which their elders have dutifully undertaken

The Club has always made it a point of honour to endeavour to repay in some measure the debt of its members to John Watson's and its greatest hope is that it will always be considered worthy of the tribute paid to it in the current official prospectus of the school, which declares :—

" One of the greatest assets which John Watson's possesses is its strong and enthusiastic Former Pupils' Club. The ties which bind the members to the school are not slender or merely sentimental. Their support and kindly interest are unfailing, and the happiest relations exist between those who are intimately connected with the school . . . . and those who were formerly of our number."

A. D. Murray.

Club Talk

The six months since our last issue have been months packed with interest for those of our circle, especially those who lived in the early days of the Club. Many of them have long been resident outwith Edinburgh but their interest in the Club has never waned. One such was the late Dr. Angus V. Macgregor (1881) of Peebles, who died on the 18th of July, 1949, at the age of 82. His interest was such that one of his last acts was to send a contribution to the Club Funds.

Dr. Macgregor continued his education at the Royal High School and Edinburgh University, where he graduated M.B., C.M., in 1892, and took his M.D. in 1897. He spent the whole of his professional life in West Hartlepool and his reputation as a gynaecologist spread far beyond the confines of County Durham.

He was more that a successful doctor ; he was also a noted sportsman. He secured a place in a final rugby trial in 1892 and in 1896 represented his country at cricket. It was as a fisherman that his sporting talents found their best outlet and in his prime he was known to be among the best dozen fishers in Britain.

To his daughter, Mrs Lindsey-Renton, we offer our sincere sympathy.

On a happier note we record the successes of the following Levites to whom we send our heartiest congratulations :—

Dr. W. Malcolm Millar (1927), lecturer in mental health at Aberdeen University since 1946, was in March appointed by the University Court to the Chair of Mental Health in succession to Professor D. R. MacCalman. Malcolm Millar graduated M.B.Ch.B. in 1936 and three years later he was awarded his M.D. degree and gained the Diploma in Psychiatry of Edinburgh University. He served in the R.A.M.C. throughout the war, his main work being in connection with psychiatry on War Office Selection Boards.

The Club now has four Professors on its Roll, the others being—W. B. Stevenson (1883), Chas. McNeil (1896) and O. S. Rankin (1899).

Mrs Storey (Nora Taubman) B.Sc., graduated Doctor of Philosophy (D.Phil.) at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, in July.

David Shaw (1924) has been appointed Procurator-Fiscal of the Sheriff Court of Inverness-shire at Lochmaddy.

Miss Clare Wylam and John G. M. Hart (1943) were capped at Edinburgh University in the summer. The former graduated Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in the Department of Pure Science with 1st Class Honours, and the latter Master of Arts (M.A.) with 2nd Class Honours in History.

John Hart has again added a distinguished list of athletic successes to his name and just as this issue goes to the press intimation has been made by the Scottish National Sports Federation of his selection as a member of the team which will make a four-month tour to Auckland, New Zealand, to represent Scotland at the forthcoming British Empire Games. He will compete in both the low and high hurdles events and we can be sure that he will make a determined bid for the coveted gold medal awards. He is now an O.T.U. trainee in the R.A.F. During the past season he retained his Scottish 120 yds. hurdles title, but perhaps his best performance was at the British Amateur Athletic Championships in London where he finished second to the world-famous Olympic hurdler, D. O. Finlay, whose winning time for the same event was only one-tenth second outside the British Native Record. John Hart captained the Edinburgh University Athletic Section and last winter played for Scotland in the Universities International Rugby Match against England, and later was awarded a Blue. More recently he has been playing for Watsonians.

Also capped at the same time was David F. MacDonald (1936) who graduated Bachelor of Law (B.L.). He has now obtained a post as Assistant to Messrs Fraser & Ross, Solicitors, in his home town of Inverness.

Of the Levites who have been studying at English Universities, Donald McClure (1941) has gained his Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) at the summer graduation ceremonies at Brasenose College, Oxford. More recently he has taken a social science course at the University of Upsala, Sweden, and has now joined the staff of Unilever under their Management Trainee Scheme.

Arthur S. Binnie (1934) has passed his second-year medical examinations at Liverpool University and is now engaged in clinical studies.

Miss Johan T. Rhind and Rev. D. A. McRury (1916) have recently received appointments to the teaching staffs of Edinburgh schools. Miss Rhind after teaching at London Road School, Edinburgh, since 1941, is now at the Royal High School, where early in the war she spent a few months as a student teacher. Donald McRury's appointment is to George Watson's College where he will be in charge of Religious Instruction.

Mention of the Royal High School reminds us that it was there that our Founder, John Watson, was educated. The foundation stone of the present High School building at Calton Hill was laid 24 days after that of John Watson's, on the 28th of July, 1825.

We wonder how many Levites have ever paid a visit to the grave of John Watson in Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh. For the benefit of those who have not it is situated about thirty yards to the

south of the Martyrs' Monument and is exactly eighteen feet in front of the ancient carved wall stone erected on 1649 to the memory of Murray of Deuchar. A willow tree stands over the spot which was brought to light in a biography in the August 1914 number of *The Levite* ; the School Trustees, as a result, erected a headstone.

George Hay (1929) has recently published two books of Scots poetry, one of which is entitled *Fuaran Sleibh* and is written under the name of Deorsa Caimbeal Hay. A recent magazine comment on this work says, " Mr Hay writes in the Gaelic, but mercifully provides or is provided with English and Scots translation in prose and verse, which itself reads well. The land and seascape, wild life and old traditions of Argyll form his quarry for images—a young but pleasant talent."

His contemporaries will not be surprised at these works for they will have vivid recollections of the Gaelic poems (not to mention those in Latin or Greek) which he used to write in bed during the summer evenings and hide under the mattress on the sound of approaching footsteps. He is one of the twenty-two Levites who since 1875 have continued their education at Fettes College.

Older Levites will be glad to learn that the Rev. David G. Hamilton (1886) is making good recovery from a recent illness, and is now able to take occasional Church services. In 1951 he will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the Ministry and in the following year his Golden Wedding. When these great days of happiness come he can be sure of the best wishes and congratulations of his fellow Levites.

The initials " D.M.T."—as everyone knows—are the initials of Mr D. M. Thomson, but to the members of an Edinburgh Golf Club they have a rather different and to some, no doubt, an ominous meaning—" Down the middle Thomson." Mr Thomson enjoys a round of golf almost daily all the year round. How many of us when we are over seventy will be able to go round in the seventies as he can do on occasion ?

Mr Thomson recently received from overseas a most interesting and appropriate presentation. It came from the Father of the Club, Mr Ken Donaldson (1878) of Johannesburg and took the form of a watercolour of the School painted by Mr Donaldson himself. The appropriateness of the gift lies in the fact that it was taken from the familiar photograph of the School which appears on page 1 of this issue, the original of which was taken 50 years ago *by Mr Thomson.*

Mr Stanley Nairne (1896) for many years closely identified with youth work in general and boys' clubs in particular, retired last spring from the position of General Secretary to the Scottish Association of Boys' Clubs which he had held since 1927. He has agreed to

act meantime, in a part-time advisory capacity. More recently he was the recipient of a presentation in recognition of his great work.

How many of " the ladies " listening to Women's Hour on 27th May recognised the voice of the lady giving a talk on " Hand Weaving in the Hebrides." It was Miss Jean Bruce, and who could be better qualified to do so.

The following enquiries have been received :—The first is from Deaconess Martha Lockyer of 10 Saxe-Coburg Place, Edinburgh 3, who seeks to get in touch with Miss Annie Reid who is believed to have married recently and who formerly resided at 274 Bath Street, Glasgow C.2. The second is from Mrs Lisle (Barbara Donald) of 20 Clarendon Square, Leamington Spa, who wishes to get in touch with Miss Nora Rodger (1914) who was a doctor and who married between the two wars while in Malaya. Can anyone help ?

We would urge all those who have not as yet done so to take the first opportunity of visiting the School and inspecting the War Memorial Library. They will not fail to be struck with its beauty. The entire woodwork of the bookcases, tables and chairs is of good Scottish oak and was wrought at Morar by Scottish rural craftsmen of the Highland Home Industries. A fine collection of books has been assembled but the Headmaster will welcome presentations of suitable books which, of course, must be in good condition. We hope that the scholars have a soft place in their hearts for the works of Robert Louis Stevenson, for that famous Scotsman has several links with the School. His cousins, Arthur M. Balfour and Claude H. M. Balfour, were Levites of 1876 and 1879 respectively. Another Levite who can claim relationship is Miss Gertrude Thomson of New York, and it is believed there are others. If so will they please let us know.

Before you leave the School we would suggest that you ask to sign the Visitors' Book, which is to be found in the Headmaster's study.

Recent visitors to Edinburgh have been Sir Donald Boyd K.C.I.E (1892), Jas. Marr (1932) and Sydney Scroggie (1935). Jas. Marr, accompanied by his wife, visited the School, and rumour has it that Sydney Scroggie while paying a similar visit with his fiancee gave her her engagement ring in the romantic setting of the Old Mill. His fiancee, Miss Barbara Ingram, was formerly a nurse at St. Dunstan's, and they are to be married on 28th December, 1949, at Taunton. Our best wishes go to them both.

On this occasion space does not permit the inclusion of intimations of Births, Marriages and Deaths, or the lists of New Members, Changes of Address, etc. These will be included in our next issue.

THE JOHN WATSON CLUB.

(Old Boys' Club, formed April, 1899. *Girls' Association in October,* 1903.)

Reconstituted, 26th June, 1937.

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Club Auditor—W. R. MENZIES.

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F.P. Foundationers' Fund—Trustees—The Deputy Keeper, the Club President, and the Headmaster.

F.P. Centenary Recreation Fund—Trustees—The Club President, two Vice-Presidents. the Secretary, the Headmaster, the Housemistress, and the School Treasurer.

GEO. C. MACKAY LTD., *Printers*, 45 BERNARD STREET, LEITH, EDINBURGH.